

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 were filed in the original application. Claims 1-9 and 27-31 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 13, 18, 19 and 21-26 are allowed, and claims 15-17 are objected to. Claims 10-12, 14-17 and 20 stand rejected.

Claims 10-12, 14-17 and 20 have been amended with this reply. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 10-26 remain pending in the application. The amendments to claims 10-12, 14-17 and 20 address formal matters and do not narrow the scope of the claims. Support for the amendments is found in the specification as filed. Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments.

Response to Restriction Requirement

Applicants affirm election with traverse of restriction Group II, claims 13-17, drawn to a coating composition. Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner partially removed the restriction requirement and issued an Office Action on claims 10-26 encompassing part of Group I and all of Groups II and III. Applicants continue to respectfully traverse the restriction requirement, and respectfully request that the Examiner examine the rest of Group I (claims 1-9) and Group IV in the next Office Action.

Group I and Group IV are related to the invention examined in the Office Action. For example, claims 10-12 formed part of the original Group I, yet were examined in the Office Action. This is good evidence that the invention of Group I is closely related to that of the other inventions. Applicants respectfully submit that examination of claims 1-9 would not be a further burden on the Examiner. Similarly, the invention of Group IV is related to the invention of Groups I-III. For example, the invention of Group IV involves using coating compositions such as are described in inventions I-III to form a cured coating. The coating composition is cured

both thermally and by ultraviolet. In light of the similarity of the subject matter of the four groups, Applicants respectfully request that the restriction requirement be withdrawn and all of the claims be examined together.

Objections to the Specification

The specification is objected to because it is alleged not be clear what the term “crosslinking composition” on page 5, line 16, refers to. Applicants have amended the specification, adding a paragraph that makes it clear what the term “crosslinking composition” refers to. Support for the amendment to the specification is found in the claims as filed. Thus, the amendment conforms the specification to originally filed claims 13-16.

Applicants believe the amendment suffices to remove the objection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

Claim Objections

Claims 15-17 are objected to as being of improper dependent form. In response, Applicants have amended claims 15-17 so that the preamble reads “a coating composition”. Applicants respectfully submit that with the amendment, claims 15-17 are in proper dependent form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

Claims 10-12, 14-17, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. In claims 10-12, the Office Action states the limitation “melamine core” has insufficient antecedent basis. In claims 14-16, the Office Action states that the limitation “crosslinking composition” has insufficient antecedent basis. In claim 20, the Office Action states the limitation “melamine formaldehyde resin” has improper antecedent basis.

Applicants have amended claims 10-12 to replace the phrase “melamine core” with “amino resin core”. The latter term has proper antecedent basis in the claim. Applicants have amended claim 20 to depend from claim 19 instead of claim 18. Applicants believe the amendments suffice to overcome the rejections. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 10-12 and of claim 20 be withdrawn.

Claims 14-16 are rejected because the limitation “crosslinking composition” in lines 6-7 allegedly has insufficient antecedent basis. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and request reconsideration.

The phrase “crosslinking composition” in lines 6 and 7 of claims 14-16 has proper antecedent basis. The crosslinker composition is defined in claim 13 from which claims 14-16 depend. In claim 13, the crosslinker composition comprises at least one functionalized crosslinker. Claims 14-16 add the further limitation that the crosslinker composition further comprises a second crosslinker different from the functionalized crosslinker. There is thus antecedent basis in claims 14-16 themselves, and in claim 13 for the phrase “crosslinking composition.” For these reasons, Applicants believe that claims 14-16 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 14-16 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 of the first paragraph as containing subject matter not enabled in the specification. For the reasons discussed immediately above, Applicants believe the term “crosslinking composition” is clear. Furthermore, Applicants have amended the specification at page 15, line 10 to provide an enabling disclosure supporting claims 14-16. For these reasons, Applicants believe claims 14-16 comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, be withdrawn.

A

CONCLUSION

For the reasons discussed above, Applicants believe that claims 10-26 are in an allowable condition and respectfully request an early notice of such allowance. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if that would be helpful to resolving any matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: February 4, 2002

By: Anna M. Budde
Anna M. Budde, Reg. No. 35,085
Attorney for Applicants

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600

AD

ATTACHMENT FOR CLAIM AMENDMENTS

The following is a marked up version of each amended claim in which underlines indicates insertions and brackets indicate deletions.

10. A crosslinker for organic coatings, comprising:
an amino resin core; and
as substituents on the [melamine] amino resin core --
one or more olefin functional groups;
at least one silicon-containing group; and
at least one group selected from the group consisting of
alkoxyalkyl, alkylol, and mixtures thereof.
11. A crosslinker according to Claim 10, wherein the substituents on the [melamine] amino resin core comprise more than one olefin functional group.
12. A crosslinker according to Claim 10, wherein the substituents on the [melamine] amino resin core comprise two or more olefin functional groups.
15. A [crosslinking] coating composition according to Claim 14, wherein 0.1 - 10%, on an equivalent basis, of the resin reactive functional groups in the crosslinking composition are contributed by the functionalized crosslinker.



16. A [crosslinking] coating composition according to Claim 14, wherein from 0.1 to 3%, on an equivalent basis, of the resin reactive functional groups in the crosslinking composition are contributed by the functionalized crosslinker.

17. A [crosslinking] coating composition according to Claim 14, wherein the functionalized crosslinker has two or more olefin functional groups.

20. A method according to Claim [18] 19, wherein the melamine formaldehyde resin has a molecular weight of up to about 2000.

